

NRCS Cost-Share Assistance Programs for Forest Landowners



United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

in partnership with



Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) sign-up for fiscal year 2011 is underway.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is accepting applications at the county USDA Service Centers for EQIP and WHIP. The first batch date is October 1, 2010. All applications received up to and including October 1 will be included in the first batch of applications for ranking and funding for conservation practices, such as, tree planting, tree thinning, hardwood spraying to release pines, shallow wildlife ponds for wildlife, filter strips, riparian buffer strips, as well as other practices. Producers are encouraged to apply early to ensure they meet current NRCS eligibility requirements. There will be monthly batch dates depending on additional funding.

Payment rates for forestry practices have increased this year from 50 to 75 percent for producers interested in tree planting and forest stand improvement. Only forestry producers with a forest management plans are eligible for cost-share. The Delaware Forest Service will work with landowners to develop forest management plans at no cost.

Limited resource farmers, beginning farmers, and socially disadvantaged producers may be eligible for payments up to 90 percent. The 2008 Farm Bill established a new payment limitation of \$300,000 for all contracts entered into during any six-year period. Projects determined as having special environmental significance may, with approval of the NRCS Chief, have the payment limitation raised to a maximum of \$450,000.

Applicants must own or control the land for the life of the contract and comply with adjusted gross income limitation provisions. Minimum contract length is two years. Eligible land includes cropland, grassland, pastureland, non-industrial forestland, and other private land that produces crops or livestock.

For additional information on EQIP or WHIP, visit www.de.nrcs.usda.gov or contact the local USDA Service Center nearest you. In Sussex, call 302-856-3990 ext 3; in Kent, call 302-741-2600 ext. 3; in New Castle, call 302-832-3100 ext 3.

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